

REGION 5 EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR FY 2003 STATE/TRIBAL/LOCAL WETLAND GRANTS

These are Region 5's criteria for evaluating the State/Tribal/Local wetland grant proposals submitted this year. You may use this as a guide to help you plan your project proposals. The highest priority of the Region is to fund projects which clearly show that State/Tribal/Local wetland protection programs will be enhanced as a result of the proposed project and to fund projects with a high likelihood of success through a well thought-out approach. All proposals must address the goals of the grants program and meet the requirements of the FY 2003 Wetland Program Development Grants Guidelines. Please see the Region 5 Supplemental Wetlands Grants Information FY 2003 for more assistance.

Criterion 1:

LEVEL OF STATE/TRIBAL/LOCAL INVOLVEMENT AND COMMITMENT

Our goal is to fund projects which clearly demonstrate a strong commitment by a State, Tribe or Local Government to protect their wetland resources. Projects which demonstrate strong support for wetland protection within higher levels of State, Tribal or local government leadership will receive a higher rating than projects with a lower level of support. Projects which demonstrate significant inter/intra-agency cooperation on protection efforts, and/or a significant commitment of financial and staff resources to the project will receive a higher rating. Proposals which have a documented strong relationship to other environmental initiatives or are part of an overall environmental plan or ongoing local project will also receive a high rating. Commitment to continuing the grant work or using its products beyond the grant period is also desirable.

Criterion 2:

LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS

This and environmental results are the most important evaluation factors. Proposals which include a clear statement of the project objectives and goals, and demonstrate that the States/Tribes/localities know what they expect from the project, and why they want to do it will receive a high rating. The proposal should identify linkage to other wetland/watershed efforts and how this project will further the goals of broader efforts. The proposal should demonstrate the State's/Tribe's/locality's commitment to completing the project, and to developing policies and implementing program changes needed to incorporate the project results.

The proposal should be clearly written and demonstrate a clear understanding of the tasks, level of effort and budget that project activities will require. The scope of work and project budget and schedule should show sufficient detail to insure that projects have been well thought-out. Specific deliverables should be identified. The projects must be realistic. The scope of work and period of performance required should be consistent with the State's/Tribe's/locality's abilities to commit staff and resources to the project.

Well-planned partnerships involving other States, Tribes, local governments, other agencies and/or the general public, as appropriate, can contribute to the success of the project. Demonstration of the commitment of other cooperating partners to participate is desirable.

Proposals based on projects that have demonstrated success (i.e., following procedures and methodologies used in previously completed, successful projects), as well as proposals whose results or methodologies can be adapted by other States, Tribes or local governments will also be favorably considered.

Criterion 3:

ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

This and the likelihood of success are the most important evaluation factors. Projects will be evaluated to determine if they will result in the protection of wetland resources. This involves not only having a good idea but also clearly anticipating its anticipated results. While we are aware that this grant money cannot be used for land acquisition, there are a number of other ways to provide protection to wetland resources. Projects which can clearly demonstrate that wetland protection will be enhanced as the result of the completion of the proposed project will receive a higher rating under this evaluation factor. Some examples of projects which would result in direct protection of wetlands include development of State/Tribal Wetland Conservation Plans which include specific provisions to identify wetlands to be protected by the State/Tribe, improvement of existing State/Tribal programs (such as 401 certification) or local programs which will provide a higher level of protection for wetland resources. Protection of wetland resources may also result from the development of model prototype projects, such as effective wetland restoration or monitoring, or innovative watershed projects for wetlands.

Criterion 4:

DEMONSTRATED NEED

We are aware that the States, Tribes and local governments have different wetland programs and are at different points in developing these programs. Under this criterion we will evaluate, the relative importance of the proposed project to the applicants wetlands program--where it's coming from and where it's going. We will examine the applicant's needs for developing or improving their wetland protection program. We will assess how the proposed project fits into the applicant's wetland program, and if the project adds an important component to the program.

Criterion 5:**SUCCESS OF PREVIOUS PROJECTS**

The Region will give States/Tribes/localities that have successfully completed previous wetland protection grant projects preference over those that have been less successful. Projects considered successful are those in which all grant conditions have been met. d what was outlined in the work plan.

Those States/Tribes/local governments that have never received a grant will not be penalized.

Criterion 6:**PLANNING PRIORITIES**

The project addresses national program priorities of a) developing a comprehensive monitoring and assessment program, b) improving the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation or c) refining the protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources.

And/or

The project is located in the area of, and compliments, a completed ADID or equivalent planning project, watershed plan or local wetlands plan.

And/or

The project contains elements of other solid program areas, including:

- Geographic-based planning to protect and restore wetlands, including watershed approaches or integrating wetland habitat into geographic planning;
- Assessing/monitoring wetland quality through the use of bioindicators;
- Innovative, interagency wetlands training;
- Cross-programmatic water programs--wetlands and non-point source issues, impaired waters, etc.;
- Water quality standards for wetlands;
- Systematic strengthening of a wetlands protection program, as outlined in the Core Elements or strong local wetlands protection.

Scoring system:

1. 0, 1, 3, or 5pts
2. 0, 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10
3. 0, 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10
4. 0, 1, 3, or 5
5. -5 or 0
6. 0, 1, 3, or 5